

Pst. Oghenethoja Umuteme MSc MDiv ThD

Fruitful Vine

**JULY
2019
EDITION**

A Study Devotional

Walking out of Failure - DAY 1

A Glimpse at Wisdom - DAY 16

The Victory in your Tongue - DAY 18





Spending Time with God

Time	Description	Action
5:00am - 5:30am	Praising His awesomeness in the cool of the morning breeze and Dedicating of the day's activity. You may decide to do it outside to feel the cool morning breeze	Prayer/Praise
9:00am-9:05am	Read a Psalm of praise back to Him. Tell Him what you feel for Him in adoration and total submission	Praise
12:00noon - 12:30pm	It is noontime – half of the workday is gone. Tell Him thank you for allowing you cross over to the other half of the workday. Thank Him for all that transpired while you worked	Prayer/Praise
4:00pm- 4:05pm	Read another Psalms of Praise	Praise
6:00pm - 6:30pm	Thank Him for the day. You are probably now at home. Call the family together or a neighbour and worship Him together	Prayer/Praise
9:00pm - 9:05pm	Read a Psalms of praise after which you should take a rest while reading your bible and meditating	Praise
11:55pm - 12:30am	Thank Him for allowing you to see a new day and take control of the new day	Prayer/Praise

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Address all enquiries to the publisher:

Restoration Media House Limited

+234-8086737791, +2348076190064,

Email: rmhltd.info@gmail.com

Follow Pastor Oghenethoja Umuteme on:



Oghenethoja Umuteme



@PstUmuteme



umuthoja



umuthoja



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Preface

We celebrated the end of the first six months of this year. Now, we are in the seventh month – packed with rest and glory. You remember – that the number seven means rest? Yes – of course! It is a time for reflection on your relationship with God, and His Christ. The world belongs to God, and no one can near God except through our gorgeous and glorious Christ. To Him, is our eternal destiny hinged. By His ribs we are healed from everlasting to everlasting. Halleluyah! You know what, I have seen and can prove beyond reasonable doubt that those who follow Christ have their burden of sorrow cast into eternal hell. No more tears – all is now joy. Your life is in His hands, so do not be afraid of the rantings of the wolf. I present to you a devotional for this month of abundant grace. A devotional that will encourage you more, and even beyond the limits of personal joy. Your joy is from the Lord. That is peace! You heard that again – I mean, “your going out and coming in,” is in His hands. Dust off those worries – and smile in victory. Again, as usual, each topical discussion will feature a brief exegesis, followed by sound hermeneutics. Also, as much as possible, inference will be made on life instances or stories, followed by faith confession. We will then pray through a prayer line, and in the end, I will provide some relevant Bible portions for your personal meditation. Please, you are on the right track – don't let the chants of the devil through the faces of complaints you see daily make you hate FAITH. Shalom!

Pastor Oghenethoja Umuteme

BTech (Mar. Engrg); MSc (Oil & Gas Engrg);
MSc (Organisational Psychology);
MBS (Biblical Studies); MTS (Theological Studies),
MTh (Theology); M.Div. (Divinity);
Th.D. (Theology); PhD (Mech. Engrg – in view)

Walking out of Failure

I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:14



Through the power of Christ, I saw shame - I walked out of it! I saw pain - I walked out of it!! This is how I became who I am today. It is what you give attention that occupies your mind and define the kind of events that keep coming around you. I cannot bow to failure. I cannot yield to intimidation. You see, Jesus made us to know that - on a day by day basis, we will be walking in the midst of wolves. Who are the wolves He referred to? Remember, He was accusing the teachers of the law - the Pharisees and Sadducees. Today, we have these same wolves as politicians and all manner of people making devilish efforts to thwart your success. They don't want to see your freedom - just like the Pharisees accused Jesus of healing on Sabbath. They are angry to see your smile. They are waiting to hear bad news from your end. Severally, their calls are like monitors to ensure they keep spreading false stories around you. This is the more reason scripture encourages us to rejoice evermore (1 Tim. 5:16). Let nothing kill your joy. You know what? I have seen something that keeps me wondering yet, rejoicing in the Lord. - that, every Christian with the rich word of salvation I walk into is always filled with joy and a charming smile that only God can give. King David - warned, "tell it not in Gath" - 2 Sam. 1:20. It is not everyone you tell your testimonies of great breakthrough. Even Jesus warned the disciples not to reveal His true identity (Matt. 16:20). Mordecai warned Esther not to reveal her true identity (Esther 2:10). Why? The enemy is hunting! Don't be quick to talk until God Himself is set to announce you for His glory. But, be very observant and know when you are no longer needed. We can walk out of failure if we surround ourselves with those who are

willing to succeed in life and not complainers. See! Your kind of affiliations affects your reasoning and mental focus. If you have friends who do not see anything good in tomorrow, neither will you walk into good tomorrow yourself. Encourage yourself to keep seeing good ahead. It is what you see that defines your reasoning. If you keep seeing corpse every day, you will think there is nothing good about this life God has given to you. How do you think God will feel when you refused to receive the abundant life He has provided in Christ? Do you know that the wisdom in Christ is the only ability you need to keep succeeding in life? C'mon, you are not a desert, but a glory and a fruitful vine to the world. There is so much you can offer beyond complains. Start thinking of something. God is willing to bless. The Lord said to me sometime ago. I heard in my sleep - "I am willing to bless anyone you bring to me, provided the work will not suffer." Our blessings are in the work that He has laid ahead of us. If you can stand for Christ wherever you are today, I see you walking out of failure permanently.

Faith confession: This is the first day of the seventh month. I am walking out of failure for real, through the power of Christ in me. It is my glory that people will see and not my shame - never again!

Let us pray: Lord - I pray, that this devotional discussion will define my new bearing in life and preserve me in your word. Henceforth, let your abundant grace and wisdom become a light upon my life. Amen!

Meditation: Philippians 3:1-21;
1 Thessalonians 5:1-28

Time to Lead others to Christ

Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame. 1 Corinthians 15:34



There is something fascinating about the stories of all the sung heroes in the Bible. They were all leaders by example in their own time. Is this not what Scripture is expecting from all of us? – Psa. 8:6. Is this not the image and likeness of God – not to be intimidated by darkness? Didn't God rescue this world from darkness in the creation stories in Genesis? Hasn't Christ overcome the devil – the prince of darkness? – John 16:33. That glorious day – as Jesus gave up the ghost unto eternal rest in glory – that was the day that Lucifer lost all the power and authority he had over the children of God. If you have failed God by not yielding to the call to lead early in your life – that today, we have the nation in the hands of thieves, who come with a morsel of bread to feed those who are gullible and easily deceived by their fake milk of hope, then teach your children to take leadership on time. From their early school days. Let them aspire to be class prefects. It starts from there. I have been in leadership from my elementary school days. It will not stop. I teach to lead. I encourage you today to aspire to lead. Do not be hiding. No man puts up a light and hide it under a bushel – so Christ advised and encouraged (Mark 4:21). Your light must shine. Be encouraged. Ask for wisdom to lead from God. Stand to preach the gospel. Do not succumb to intimidation and inferiority complex. You have something in you by the anointing of Christ in you. Speak out – the world is waiting for you, for the earnest manifestation of you as kings, queens, princes and princesses (Rom. 8:19). Not as criminals or people with attitudes that makes others hate faith. I speak into your life – with the mind

of Christ. See – do not expect that the devil will allow you to shine unless you are willing to build up strong resistance and competence. This is why as Christians, do not become the one who will fail in Christ. I do not take it as excuse that your Christianity is the reason you cannot come out with a 1st class in your undergraduate studies. Excuse me! If you don't lead, how can you lead others to Christ? Are you not aware that your organisation or wherever you are needs someone to lead them to the path of success? Have you not read of Joseph, Daniel, Peter, Paul, etc., in the Bible? How did they succeed? Is it not by the power of God? Why are you hiding. See – I want to tell you, look for every opportunity to lead others in the fear of God. Even in your home, try to always do something that will make people appreciate the God in you. Don't be hiding. Today, we are crying in Nigeria and all around the world. Is it not because we have failed God – when we refused to act when we should have done so? I leave you to Faith. But, one thing is sure – your victory is in your leading.

Faith confession: Lord! I am aware by this devotional that we should be reasonable and responsible wherever we are, as leaders who can control situations.

Let us pray: Lord – by your power and authority in me, I will lead to win, win to overcome and overcome to shine. Save me, for I was born to lead, and not to be subjected to human mediocratic rule. Amen!

Meditation: Psalms 84:1-12; 1 Corinthians 15:1-34

Work on your Approach 1: Your Speech matters

Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man. Colossians 4:6



Our achievements in life depends greatly on how we answer people. If you were to attend a job interview, your success at the interview is how much your speech is able to convince the panel of interviewers. And, because mankind is not polished in speech to the level that is acceptable for success, Jesus promised the disciples that they will be given a divine mouth filled with wisdom whenever they are confronted to speak, in Luke 21:15- "For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist." The last word said – "...your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist." This is one area that Christians are failing. While they know how to fast and pray, they lack good manner of approach and speech. Your approach is boosted when your speech is filled with articulative wisdom. People desire to listen to you when you can impress them with facts and evidence and not by vain saying. One thing that make people not to pick your calls is when they feel you do not have anything to offer. You see, Moses knew the importance of good speech to his mission to rescue the Israelites from Egypt. This was why he complained about his disadvantage because he stammers. Then and there, God raised Aaron for him. See this conversation in Exodus 4:13-14, "And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and he said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well." This is one reason Moses was always filled with anger, and he eventually offended God out of anger (Numbers 20:8-12). Your manner of talking dictates the pace of your

anger. In Psalms 141:3, we also see how David, knowing how his speech can affect his destiny begged the Lord, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips." Marriages are breaking today because many spouses lack good speech and anger control. To set it in clear terms, good speech is not about grammar. In effect, scripture says in Proverbs 16:24, "Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones." You see what a good speech is all about? It is filled with pleasant words. This is why Jesus says we should avoid long arguments when He said – "But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil" – Matthew 5:37. Brethren – you might not have been experiencing answers to your prayers because your speech is horrible, even before God. Hear what God says in Malachi 3:13, "Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, "what have we spoken so much against thee?" Even in the office, your boss may not be accepting you as you expect because your speech is horrible.

Faith confession: Lord! I understand that those who have bad manner of speech, are those who also argue with the purpose of God for their lives in line with how Moses was rejecting the call of God.

Let us pray: Lord! I know that my success depends on my approach, and that to sustain my approach I need to work on my speech. Help me Lord and grant me the mouth filled with pleasant speeches. Amen!

Meditation: Matthew 12:36; Proverbs 15:1-4; Proverbs 17:27

Work on your Approach 2: Your Outlook Matters

I have likened the daughter of Zion to a comely and delicate woman. Jeremiah 6:2



To be comely is to be very attractive. In the anchor scripture above, the Lord expressed that a beautiful woman is also a delicate woman. Why? It is because she uses her beauty as a hunting tool to gain riches and favour. But this attitude can be very damaging as it can make such women not to seek knowledge, and they will end up as failures when their physical charm and beauty begin to fade. This is why we must work on our outlook. We do this by taking the attention of people from our physical beauty. It is the reason we must also try as much as possible to remain natural. I have heard some women complain they have lost the attention of their husbands. You know what, a time comes when make ups on women look like the decoration on masquerades. This is very true. You will begin to notice that the skin of the face can no longer hold the heavy weight of the facial concoction as one grows older. The wrinkles of the face can be worsened with heavy makeups which can sag the skin on our faces. Instead, seek wisdom and direct people's attention to the wisdom in you. Who want to listen to someone without wisdom for a longer time than necessary? Even, as parents we always want to be closer to the child who displays enormous wisdom and not beauty. A woman once complained of losing the attention of her husband, despite being beautiful and dresses seductively to attract his attention. Then, I asked – “what else can you offer beyond trying to look beautiful?” I advised her – “you are getting older by the day while trying to look seductive, and the truth is that your face is getting out of shape due to too many make-ups.” She looked at me for some seconds and said - “pastor, I need help.” I told her – “you need Christ. Mary Magdalene never

wore make-ups after her deliverance; she only went for that which was needful. Who cares for make-ups anyway? Is it not for those who hate their natural outlooks? Do real men have time to look at seduction? Seduction only entices those still far from Christ. God hates intellectual dullness. Do you know that our outlooks can give others wrong impression about is? If I see a woman with heavy make-ups, all I think is that she has nothing to offer upstairs, except to lure men to bed. Be encouraged to settle for that which is real. Something that will not fade – and that is knowledge beyond knowledge. Hasn't the Bible said that we suffer for lack of knowledge? To women– if your husband appreciates your seductive overtures, be assured he is seeing another woman outside. For men, if your woman spends so much time on make-ups, know that she is expecting the praise of other men. Let's call a spade what it is!

Faith confession: Lord, I am willing to work on my outlook. Henceforth, I will ensure that my outlook do not become a distraction that will make others not to see the great wisdom in me.

Let us pray: My Lord, My God, help me to focus on reality and not on things that will fade away. Let my outlook glorify your name and not to attract evil minded people to me. Help me not to be attracted to the wrong person because of the deceit that can come with outward appearance. Amen!

Meditation: Proverbs 2:6-22; 1 Samuel 16:7; Matthew 23:27; Philipppians 4:8

Work on your Approach 3: Draw the Boundary of Interaction

...know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. James 4:4

A boundary is a dividing line. Often times, Christians do not know when to draw the boundary of interaction with principles that pleases God, and how to stick to it. We interact daily. We communicate daily – about our needs and troubles. It is important to ask ourselves how much we control what we utter before others. What do we tell others about ourselves and our problems? Do we just meet people today and start telling them our ugly stories? We really need to draw the boundary of interaction. We need to be conscious of what we let out into the ears of others. As I always say – the devil does not know what is in your heart except you tell it out. God is the only one that works with the information in your heart – in order to guide you to your expected end. Scripture advocates that we draw our boundaries of interaction through self-control. This is because, our natural instincts jump like the frog, and our brain want to be everywhere at the same time. We become restless and will want to do things to be accepted in a social group where we can expend our social energy in discussions. It is during this period that we often make some bad friends, who admires what we have that we are not aware of and will want to tap it for their selfish gains. This is how people fall into the trap of immorality and being duped in business. To keep appropriate boundaries is to keep assessing what we need to preserve and why we need to do that. Hence, good boundaries can aid us, as Christians, in maintaining healthy outward influences. Children of the kingdom of light have no cooperativeness with those of darkness, because we have nothing in common. This is the indication of Paul's counsel in, 2 Corinthians 6:14, "...for what

fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" We are expected to display outward kindness and friendliness as people who are Christlike in their being. Nevertheless, we must not be found dabbling into a life that champions the course of destruction for the purpose of God for humanity. If the association will make you hate God, withdraw or never belong in the first place. Those who are evil know how to quote bible verses to derail you once they know you are ignorant of biblical truths. Our wish is not to keep people away, but when people are being destructive, the boundaries we set can limit the evil they commit against us. As you go out from today, learn to draw the boundary of your interaction. Ask yourself – "what impresses God in what I am seeing, doing, hearing, talking, etc." It starts from observing these little things that we do daily. Be conscious - it does matters.

Faith confession: Lord – Jesus! I am aware that I need to draw the boundary of my interactions with others. I need to equally set my priorities on those things that pleases you and appeal to your attention.

Let us pray: Most faithful Lord and saviour, I may have waived the precious time you gave to me in seeing, hearing and talking about things that devalue your presence in my life. Teach me henceforth o lord, on how to become mindful of those things that do not please you, so that I will continually take corrections. Amen!

Meditation: Romans 6:1-23; Proverbs 22:1-29

Work on your Approach 4: Get the right Wisdom

*...a man's wisdom maketh his face to shine,
and the boldness of his face shall be changed. Ecclesiastes 8:1*

The day I came across the above portion of scripture, I became determined to get more knowledge. I have discovered that successful people only give attention to those who have gotten the right wisdom. Your face shines in wisdom and people will admire you with awe. This is where many starts seeing themselves as God and will start insulting the very existence of God in their lives. Whatever wisdom we have that has brought food on our table and has made us famous is only with the help of God. God grants wisdom so that we can prosper. Solomon was advised also this way in 1 Chronicles 22:12, "Only the Lord give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel, that thou mayest keep the law of the Lord thy God." But we see how he fell from grace when he followed his heart of lust after women. Have you seen how gorgeously those who have gained academic prowess walk to address others when called upon, and how many will gaze at their boldness and courage? Wisdom makes you walk in fame and respect. The Bible cautioned – 2 Timothy 2:15-16, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness." We can become frail and afraid when we lack the right wisdom, and then start to babble when we face others to address them. That scripture above was Saint Paul's honest advice to the young pastor – Timothy. Why? Paul himself was learned and have seen the advantage that come with been filled with the right information and wisdom. It made him to stand out tall in the midst of others. If you

want success you must get the right knowledge in the area of your calling. If you are a pastor – get the right knowledge so that you will not be limited to vain babblings. Based on your limitation, seek counsel from God, and also understudy those that are doing very well in the area of your limitation. We are advised in proverbs 4:7, "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore, get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding." So, we can see that wisdom is the principal thing. And, getting this wisdom from God is all we need. Why? Scripture says in Jeremiah 51:15, "He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding." Else we will become like salt that has lost its savour and will be thrown out to be walked upon by the foot of men (Matt. 5:13). It means – we become rejected and abandoned when we do not live with the right wisdom, power and understanding. This is where you need Christ. As Paul will advocate in 1 Corinthians 1:24, "...Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

Faith confession: I understand that wisdom, power and understanding are the three things that can define the life of a successful Christian, and we must get them from God to be relevant in this world.

Let us pray: Help me dear God and grant me the right knowledge that will make me become great and work meticulously towards the success of my calling in Christ. Amen!

Meditation: Proverbs 14:1-35

God is God

Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart. Psalms 73:1



The link to heaven is much more wireless than the link between our mobile phone and the network operators interchange centres. Why can't we wait on heaven, if we can wait for our phone lines to go through. We do try several times to reach those we desire to communicate to, when the network is not through or the person is busy. Many people live in wickedness because they feel no one sees them. Hence, scripture says in Isaiah 47:10 – "For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me." If we have the understanding that God can reveal secrets, then we must also know that any deeds that man does in secret shall be in the open someday. If we also read further in the same Isaiah 47:11, we see that many become so foolish as they acquire more of worldly knowledge. We have seen how many argue blindly about the existence of God. Whether we call it science or technology, they will always fade away. But God has kept His creation from age to age, up till this moment we live. We have complained about His silence in the spate of evil in the land, worldwide. We want Him to act as in the days of the disciples when the duo – Ananias and his wife Sapphira died for lying before the Lord (Acts 5:1-10). We want God to act now – and when we don't see His action, we go so angry. The Israelites gave the heathen nation of Syria of old the impression that God only act in the mountain, as they kept going to worship there, but God said their impression was wrong (1Kings 20:28). If we think God only answer us in the church, then we will give unbelievers the impression that God can be restricted. One thing, I can assure us is that God is not far, and

heaven is closer than we have thought. I have seen God act without delays. I have had answers to my prayers in less than an hour. I have seen God honour my righteous desires in minutes. I have seen God intervened to save me from shame in seconds. I have seen His hand – right here on earth. So, I can tell you that if you can wait to get your phone call go through, equally wait to hear God. There is no delay in waiting because you are already waiting. We acknowledge joy when we live in truth. I have seen that even when men make riches through lies, there is never joy in their hearts. No one lie to gain, but the truth will definitely define your path unto glory. Many have lied – where are they? Many have stolen public funds that today our dear nation is suffering in penury – where are they and their children? You see, God is acting, even now. In your hope and trust in His words, He will conclude His will upon every life. No matter how you feel about God – God is God!

Faith confession: Lord, I am encouraged to follow you. I have checked through my life and I can see your goodness. I might not have appreciated this enough. From today, I promise to keep thanking you for the good life you have endowed me with. Thank you because you are God.

Let us pray: My Lord and my God, let your wings of goodness provide shelter for me all the days of my life. Let the goodness in your salvation, distinguish me for glory and honour before men. Amen!

Meditation: 2 Thessalonians 1:1-12; Psalms 27:1-14; Jeremiah 27:5

Prepared for the Future

I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. Psalms 16:8-9



Employers want those who have skill and intelligence for employment, and not those needing help. God equally want those who have courage, knowledge, skill and heavenly intelligence as His pastor. When men disrespect the God in you, that is when you should become so bold to move forward. Until you are told, you cannot walk into it. God has to tell Abraham to see before he saw – Genesis 13:14-18. That scale has to be taken away from your eyes. Even your pastor can hoard your blessings. Why? Blessings come through hope. Until you aspire to hope, you cannot wish. A time came, the prophet Isaiah was hoarding the glory of the children of Israel (Isaiah 48:6). Hence, God reminded him of what he should have done – “Thou hast heard, see all this; and will not ye declare it? I have shewed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them.” He had seen and heard of the good tidings of showers of blessings coming from God, but he refused to declare it and the people could not build their hope to trust. Until you trust in the lord, there is no faith in you. You see – trust come through aspiration, as I mentioned earlier. But you need to be given the right word and message. This is where our pastors can help. As long as Isaiah did not prepare the people with the word of hope, God could not do anything. Just like you have to prepare for the rain, else will become drenched in it – so also, we need to prepare for the blessings of God, else we will gain nothing when He visits. This is why you need to keep your pastor focused on the word, so that he can see and hear when God is sending help and will

prepare you with the right mindset to receive. In return, try to care for his needs, else he will be out of his duty post, and the next release will be delayed. Have I revealed a secret? Yes – this is the secret. If he moves far away from the altar because he has to chase material needs, be rest assured that the church will sooner lose her spiritual flavour and saltiness. What we will see next is shame and mockery, as we will no longer be recognised as those bearing the light of God – the bearers of hope. Not until Joseph was recognised did he saw breakthrough. You haven't got what they need. They will listen when you have God in you, and not just around you. Let God dwell in you – and the world will come looking for you. Do not go for ambitions that will earn you self-praise. Be real in whatever you do. Christ never lived a fake life. He was dedicated to the purpose of His birth all the days He lived on earth. Even now, he is still mediating for all faithful Christians before the golden altar and the throne of grace and mercy.

Faith confession: Lord I realised from today's devotional that those who make things happen are those who have regarded your person in their lives and give attention to your instructions for their wellbeing.

Let us pray: Oh Lord! I ask for your righteous spirit to live in me, to enable me to receive the divine sight to see into my future, so that I will not be moved by the present events, which tend to discourage and disgrace me. Amen!

Meditation: Psalms 16:1-11

The Boat didn't rock Jesus!

And they feared exceedingly; and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him? Mark 4:41



Jesus cannot be in the boat, and you are afraid of boat wreckage. I have noticed that many people just live on earth all the days of their lives in abject regret thinking that there is no other recourse. I have seen those who live as though they are owning the devil and that they must continue to please him because they have done things that keep making them feel guilty. This is not the kind of life God is expecting us to live. We made our mistakes in life. We fell into temptations. Our flesh did suffer. Our souls faced retribution in the sight of God and our days languished in pain and sorrow. It is enough! That is in the past. Jesus has forgiven us, therefore get on His boat and be saved. There is a difference between someone who is existing, simply using their ability to breathe, and someone who is living. Those who live add value to society, while those who exist are no more than additions to the population. Those who only add to the population are those politicians will often deceive with a morsel of bread in order to get their numbers, not vote, because these people don't understand voting rights. They don't yet have a clue what life is all about. These are the ones the devil lies in wait for. There is what I will refer to as God's Special Messaging Link (GSML), between you and Him. If we can keep this link tightly connected, we will receive the warmth and breath of life, and the situations of life won't have power over us. The title of today's devotional is very important to us. The waves came boisterous – yet Jesus was in the boat. Are you thinking that because you are a Christian that the devil will not attack? This is when to expect his attack and become more conscious of your link to

God. The disciples called on Christ because He was right there with them. Can you call on Him when the situation is getting out of hand? Is Christ with you in that boat of life? You see, the boat the disciples were in can be likened to that pursuit of life you are into – academic, ministry, business, trade, employment, etc. If you have Christ with you, you cannot go down. We can take a look at the story that led to the above anchor verse very closely – Mark 4:37-39, “And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.” In verse 41, Jesus reproved them – “Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?” And, I say to you today – Christ cannot be in it, and you will fail. Why are you this afraid?

Faith confession: Lord! I will keep my faith in your word. I will never allow myself to be carried away by the deceit of the tongues of men. I promise to live by your wisdom and wish for me life.

Let us pray: Eternal Lord of glory. Let the understanding I have from the devotional of today encourage me to keep living for you. Let my faith be strong to trust in you in the midst of the storms of life – Amen!

Meditation: Psalms 71:1-24; John 5:17-47

It is a matter of Time!

*No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life;
that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier – 2 Timothy 2:4*



It is funny how we expect good from occult men and women on the seat of authority – both in governance and public positions of authority, that even today – we see pastors running to them for monetary donations. Be real – just be Christlike, and you will be approached to offer your own voice in society when the time comes. Such is the story of Daniel and Joseph we always preach in the bible. When Jesus healed the woman bound in Luke 13:11-15, where the people happy? Don't expect people to be happy when you achieve breakthrough. This is the more reason why you must stick to your God. He is the only one who will not be jealous of you because of your achievements in life. Make Him your eternal fiend. Befriend His wisdom and answer His call. All those running around you will desert you when you need them most. Yes of course! I am talking from experience. Today – I only bother about what God says and that is enough for me (John 5:41). Living to please people is now in the past. I don't really care what goes on in the mind of people – because they have made me to accept the fact that they don't mean anything to my life. So, instead of pleasing them so that I will not lose their patronage, I have decided to follow the one who came to my rescue when the tide turned against me. Sure! This is the fact of life. I am only encouraging you to beware of men who sing your praise when you have food to give to them. They will desert you when the world come chasing after you, then you only have God to look up to. Jesus healed and did miracles – these same people refused to change their ways of life, hence He went and cursed them all (Matthew 11:20-22). You see what I mean? I have heard of how many see

pastoring as providing the basic necessities of life to others, and men singing their praises. I will only advise such pastors to watch it – because sooner when the politicians patronising them, whom these pastors have not being able to lead to Christ, stop coming and there is no more inflow of money to do the charity things they do – these same people will run away. You don't run a church by pleasing people – never! It is the last thing any thoughtful pastor should do. You might not have the crowd now. In effect, crowd is not the measure of success in ministry. Haven't you seen that men who lies a lot are the ones that beautiful girls fall for? Yes – this is very true. The ants gather around sugar to take a grain with them, because like the ants on sugar, the devil will lead people to you that will come to devour you. People do not gather around you without devaluing you. Be mindful of that which God has blessed you with, and in no time, you will have fulfilment. As long as you keep having the assurance of Christ, and He is satisfied with what you do in His name, he will surely make a way some day. It is only a matter of time. And that time is near if you remain steadfast.

Faith confession: Lord! I am encouraged to be steadfast in your service. I know that it is only a matter of time, and my breakthrough will be announced for all to see.

Let us pray: Dear Lord! help me to become so careful, so that I will not please men to slate you. Amen!

Meditation: Matthew 24:13; Ecclesiastes 9:11; Psalms 4:1-8

Attentively Attractive

... men will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself. *Psalms 49:18*

The anchor verse says that you win the praise of men when you have come to limelight. What do I mean to be attentively attractive? It is an advice of consciousness for those who have become attractive to others. This discussion follows from what we discussed in the devotional of day 4. But here I want us to talk beyond physical outlook. This is because attraction is not limited to our physical appearances. Aside beauty, people can become attracted to your wealth and fame. We should not value our wealth more than what they can give. Cars are to take us from one place to the other – keep it so. Our houses are to protect us from sun, rain and give us temporary security why we sleep – keep it equally so. We have children to lead them to God and have a generation behind – keep it so. We marry to find succour and immediate help, and to have cheerfulness to live longer – keep it so. If we become attracted to our vain wealth, without being attentive to the one who provided them for us, we might lose them to the storm of ignorance. This is why we need to attend to whatever brings the attraction. We need to spend time to ask ourselves if we have become rude and arrogant since our status in life changed for the better. We need to continuously watch and assess the moral integrity of those who now support all that we do now that we are blessed. You see, with the life of those who draw closer to you, and the kinds of things they do in your present, you can tell if you have missed the mark of salvation. If people can lie in your presence and carry out other acts that you know are not godly before your watchful eyes, it shows they no longer regard your Christianity. Instead of trying to correct them again and again without success, I would advise that you go into your

closet and truly repent. This is how to watch your attraction to others. This is why we discussed about setting the boundaries of interaction earlier. Also, you must be conscious of how the opposite sex – come around you. If you are a young or an older man, and you notice that since you became attractive through the riches of God upon your life, that young girls and women now draw closer to you then, the spirit of seduction is trying to penetrate your life. You have to equally watch it. While it is a difficult thing to push them away by mere physical avoidance, your closeness to God and the fire of the holy ghost over your life can protect and cover you, and you will gradually notice that they no longer come close. And, you too, do not create the impression that you are interested in their overtures. Mind how you appreciate the beauty of the opposite sex when you have risen to glory, so that you don't fall into sin. Today pastors accept all manner of immoral dressings that offends God. False teachings can bring the anger of God as we can see in the last statement of Isaiah 29:13, "...their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men..."

Faith confession: I am a child of faith. My glory is established in the Lord. There is no manipulation of the evil world that will get to me. I am under the protective canopy of the Lord all the days of my life.

Let us pray: Lord – Jesus! As you bless me with your provisions, help me to realise when I am been invaded by the evil world, and give me the wisdom to watch over my integrity and sanctity. Amen!

Meditation: Isaiah 58:11; Proverbs 23:1-35

I sense breakthrough

And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. Luke 22:35



We serve and follow God through courage. This was why God spoke to Joshua in the book of Joshua 1:7, "Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest." Today, as I write these words, I sense a strong spirit of breakthrough upon your soul. When we mean breakthrough, many only think it is about making huge amount of money. Well, that is financial breakthrough. Here, I want to speak of breakthrough in wider terms of overcoming whatever had pinned us down to keep experiencing stagnation in life. Breakthroughs are celebrated in the science world. For instance, when we hear of a major breakthrough in the treatment of an ailment – there is joy in the medical world and for the patients who have prayed that a cure be found, just like in the case of HIV/AIDS. In clear terms, breakthrough in the sight of God is when we achieve the rest of mind. We may not know what rest of mind means until we begin to experience it. And so, if there is anything that has held you bound – it is my sincere prayer today that you begin to experience unprecedented breakthrough. I pray for you to begin to experience glory on every side, as long as you have sincerely decided to follow and observe the precepts of the Lord. The inheritances of the Lord is secured for those that follows His ways. This is your portion in the land of the living. You shall not beg to eat while unbelievers are having the best for themselves. The estates of the wicked shall be taken away and handed over to the faithful in the Lord. You shall experience the glory of his anointing upon

all that you are doing. You shall experience the rain of abundance from the throne of His majesty – far beyond what man can comprehend. You are victorious in the name of the Lord. Anyone that will contend with you in your own possession shall be shown the grave by the angels of His holiness. Today, as you read this page – your soul shall be lifted up for recognition in the realm beyond the atmosphere of satanic influence. Any spirit that shall think to do you evil will face the fire of the wrath of God. Today, by the spirit upon me as I write these lines – your testimony shall be displayed for all to see, and your celebration shall be the next before the congregation of God in His holy altar in the name of the Lord of hosts. Receive breath from the breath of the Lord. Receive peace from the hand of the Lord. Let the echo of breakthrough vibrate through your entire being in the name of the Lord. You are beautiful in the Lord! You are victorious in the Lord! You are destined for greater glory henceforth in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. In the name of God - the father, and the son and the Holy Ghost – Amen!

Faith confession: I shall never lack a thing not now that the anointing of His holiness and righteousness has presented my case before the throne of grace and mercy.

Let us Pray: Lord! Let your divine will saturate my soul with goodness. Let the rains pour down blessings upon my life. Let every spirit of stagnation and rejection be silenced forever in my case. I believe! Amen!

Meditation: Deuteronomy 8:7-9

The Face of Integrity

Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die. But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh... Job 2:9-10



Job maintained his integrity in the face of adversity. A pastor once complained that the seductive dressings in the church that he pastored was caused by his wife who continuously refused his corrections not to wear revealing dresses. Is this pastor proud to be called a husband and a pastor? So, if he were Job, he could have cursed God? The voice of the Lord echoed to warn all erring pastors. They were deceived by preachers of vanity whom they flirted with in America and by the "Babalawos" who invaded the church in suits and encouraged pastors to follow after money and to allow seduction in church. Today – their heart is burning, because the Lord is angry with them and chastising them. I will be happy if they can come into the open and tell their congregation that they are being chastised by God for preaching lies. No! I am not sure they have the integrity to do that., as they hide under false integrity. As the world sinks in sin and the pursuit of vanity, God 's anger is building against those who have defamed His name. When I look at these pastors who are now filled with guilt in the spirit, all I can tell them is to go and meet God and seriously apologise and not to still be standing on the pulpit to lie. Integrity is sanctity. Preachers, because they need the wealth of the rich – will fail to tell them to repent but will come to the poor and tell them to repent else they are on their way to hell. Where is our integrity if the God we present to the rich is different from the God we present to the poor? If we cannot defend the holiness of God and preach it before everyone that we come across, how come we are claiming to be the ambassadors of Christ. The word of God says, in 1 Kings 9:4-5, "And if thou wilt walk before me,

as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my judgments: Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised to David thy father, ..." This is God telling King Solomon that while it is possible for children to keep enjoying the grace upon their parents even after their demise, such grace can only be sustained if the children themselves walk in the same measure of integrity that their parents exercised while walking with God. It is one reason why the flame of God upon many ministries die out after their founders are gone. Even in business! Can our successors maintain the same temple of integrity when we are no more? Can our spouse and children maintain their integrity in the Lord in the face of adversity? What face do people notice when they see us at first – that of integrity or deceit? Occasionally, we complain that people do not attend to us in the manner of respect we expected. Sometimes, it is because of the real face beyond the physical which they see before them.

Faith confession: Lord! I understand that we cannot speak the words of sanctity that can edify the church if we do not regard your holiness and righteousness.

Let us pray: Oh God! wear me a garment of integrity to enable me to display your attributes before every manner of person, no matter their position and personality in society and in the church. Amen!

Meditation: Psalms 26:1-12; Proverbs 11:3

Overcoming Self Praise

The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty? Daniel 4:30



In most cases, we really do not appreciate the fact that we are addicted to self-praise.

But, when we listen to what people say about themselves, we can notice every element of self-praise which shall be discussing in this devotional. Someone wrote the following lines seeking for help in the internet, "I have a very old bad habit of self-praise. I feel very guilty and I have tried a lot of times to stop it, but I have remained unsuccessful. I cry and pray every time, but at the end I repeat that evil habit again. Right now, I am feeling very guilty and want to get rid of it because I know this is not Christlike. This habit started about 13 years ago, when I was in my early thirties, but now I am tired of it and want to get rid of it totally. My husband has also warned me that if I did this again, it might spell doom in my marriage. I need help." This is a sincere wish to change. Have you noticed this too? Haven't you sense that people just pay deaf ears to you when you are speaking? When people are silent whenever you speak, and do not want to say a word – it doesn't really mean, in most cases that they are satisfied with your opinion. They may just want to give you your way – knowing that you cannot be corrected even when it is glaring that you are wrong. It happens sometimes in church as you hear people say they did this and that. That they are the financial pillars of their church and that their pastor cannot do without them. When they enter into the church, even when service is ongoing, they defy all the approaches of the ushers to sit at the back as they walk to the front for their presence to be recognised. The more we dwell in the praise of self- the more we become ignorant of our downfall and hypocrisy. If we take a look at the logos and motto of companies worldwide, we can see elements of

self-praise. The owners of Titanic said the ship was unsinkable – what happened thereafter? The manufacturers of the Boeing 737 Max 8 that crashed twice in two years have an advertising slogan in a 2018 TV commercial which says, "The future is built here." Have they sustained their pride? What is the future in terminating lives? How often have we failed to meet up to the expectations that our self-praise has earned us? This is the reason celebrities borrow to live. Politicians steal public funds to maintain the pride and the unearned names of fake honour and respect that they give to themselves. It is the same reason pastors finds it hard to correct evil in their church because they don't want to lose the crowd. It is the reason many women keep hiding under the pretence of being busy not to cook, because they cannot cook a good meal. Self-praise destroys self-worth. It is not a character for a child of destiny in Christ. Our Lord never praised himself beyond what the Father in heaven adorned Him with (John 17:5). Be truthful to yourself and stand where your honour will stand the test of time.

Faith confession: Lord! I can now see the dangers in the praise of self. I might have sinned against you this way. Today I refrain from allowing self-praise to ruin the salvation I have in you.

Let us pray: Lord! let me not dwell in the praise of self. Rather, let me praise and thank you for all you have given to me. Let my heart not be lifted up against you and let me not rob you of your praise. Amen!

Meditation: Acts 12:21-23; Daniel 4:19-37

Becoming a Successful Winner of Souls for Christ

*The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life;
and he that winneth souls is wise. Proverbs 11:30*



As long as God is God, He is able to save those who follow His ways (Isaiah 46:9). He is able to bring you gain and not pain. All He needs from us is total repentance. This is the first attribute of a successful soul winner. This is because people watch us more than they listen to us. Hence, God said in 2 Chronicles 7:14, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." This is a very popular portion of scripture. God is willing to answer our prayers if we can sustain our conscience in His grace. Now, to the topic of discussion – I have defined the act of soul winning as, "an active process through which the unsaved are added to the body of Christ daily, and they are retained for the great harvest of the Lord, when He shall return to judge the world." With the above working definition, we are set to do justice to the topic at hand. From the above definition, we can say that the act of soul winning involve identifying a soul, knowing the soul, identifying a church body that can help nurture the soul in line with the peculiar nature of the identified soul, encouraging the soul to undergo a training process which will help him/her mature in the spirit, encouraging the soul to desire the holy spirit, and then ensuring that the soul has actually received the holy spirit. Not until the soul receives the Holy Spirit, can she function as a sheep, and will therefore not abide till Christ comes. The process outlined above is not going to be an easy one. This is why the Bible says that the soul winner is wise. Why? Because to win a soul, one has to apply wisdom, and wisdom can only come from God.

This is because change comes by applying the word of God daily to our life (Psalms 19:7). So, as we patiently lead others to follow Christ, we need to prayerfully give them the word of God and let them know what pleases and displeases Him. Not, when we have brought them in with lies and later start pointing them to the truth, as is done today by many preachers. Tell those coming of the anger and wrath of God. Tell them to abhor sin. Tell them about hell and heaven. And this has to be done by the continual building of faith in them. So that they can please God all the days of their lives (Hebrews 11:6). Faith is total dependence in God (Jeremiah 17:7-8). I developed what I call the 3 integral parts of success, which are Learning, Understanding and Adaptation (LUA). A new soul must learn, understand the ways of God and adapt his or her life to the character of Christ to remain in the heavenly fold. We must let them know this. Diluting the doctrine of salvation to keep them coming to church service will not do us any good.

Faith confession: Lord! I understand how to win souls today. I am willing to win souls into your house, teach them and become examples on how to follow your ways and not the enticing teachings of men.

Let us pray: Lord, I am willing to become a successful soul winner. Give me the wisdom to bring souls to you daily, and to help them grow in your wisdom and might daily, to be able to overcome evil. Amen!

Meditation: Matthew 9:13; 2 Peter 3:9; 2 Timothy 2:20-26

A Glimpse at Wisdom

*Wisdom hath builded her house,
she hath hewn out her seven pillars. Proverbs 9:1*



The anchor verse above was written to inform us what wisdom is all about. It says wisdom has built her house and the house is resting on seven supernatural pillars, or what I will refer to as seven foundational rocks. Pillars are the support for any mega structure. If you want greatness, then the wisdom of God is all you need. Wisdom rest on seven pillars and we have seven days in a week, which means that everyday we need to exercise one of these pillars to ensure that we have the totality of wisdom throughout the week. Isaiah 11:2 also opened our eyes to the fact that we have seven inseparable spirits of God. These are the seven pillars. Jeremiah 3:15 says that God is recruiting shepherds after His heart who will feed His Children with wisdom and understanding. This implies that the seven pillars that wisdom is resting on has a lot to do with the purpose and plan of God for mankind. Every house has its own occupants, and any day any of these occupants is absent there is a vacuum usually felt within the home. This vacuum relates to the usefulness of the individual to that home. The knowledge in these occupants explains what goes on in that home. The exhibition of foolish characters is an interpretation of traits of failures. The seven pillars of wisdom are the secrets to our expectations of success. Every building sitting on a poor foundation must surely get washed out someday under the rains. The integrity of a building is tested when there is flood. Failure in our marriages, businesses, academics, etc is due to the lack of wisdom. This is to say there is a foundational problem. The Bible made us to know that the righteous can do nothing once the foundation is being destroyed (Psalms

11:3). This foundation is made up of the seven pillars which wisdom sits on. We shall be talking on how these foundations can be reinforced later on. To me, wisdom is knowledge and understanding in action. It is the beauty people see around you. It is the fruits of righteousness living in you. It is the result of what you see in your life when you do the word and apply the word to your situation. It is the totality of your trust in God - knowing what is good and bad, choosing life and abandoning death, valuing the life you have today, and thinking about tomorrow. The ability to apply the word of God is the ingredient needed to enjoy a prosperous life (Ephesians 1:17-18). We are told in Ecclesiastes 7:19, that "Wisdom strengthens the wise more than ten rulers of the city." What then are we saying? Should everyone not desire wisdom in order to receive the strength that will make one defeat ten rulers of the city? Or better still, don't we desire wisdom to take over the world for Christ because He has overcome the world already? (Revelation 3:21).

Faith confession: Lord, I know that when I am confident in my spirit that my sins are forgiven and I apply my heart to your ways, that your Holy Spirit will come to live in me. Grant me a heart to trust you.

Let us pray: My Lord, set my heart to depend on your everlasting wisdom daily. Let me realise that wisdom is understanding that my sins are forgiven so that I can work in your vineyard. Amen!

Meditation: Proverbs 9:1-18

How Youths Can Succeed Beyond the Ordinary

...for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth....**Genesis 8:21**

The above anchor verse opens our eyes on why youths do err. We are made to know that the act of sinful imagination starts from our youth. Since this is what God Himself says of our age of youth, it is therefore in place that everyone in society should be concerned about how to stop this imagination of evil. We are aware that in the heart, there exist two available knowledge, and these are the knowledge of good and of evil, which came into existence as a result of man's sin in the Garden of Eden. The question we should be asking ourselves is, "why can't youths imagine good?" The reason is simple, because those who are ahead, who supposed to mentor these youths, have in their own days of youth imagined evil and have achieved by evil. Hence, the youths only picked up evil from where the older ones stopped. This is why we often say, "like father like son or like mother like daughter." Youths often get angry when they feel their talents are not being recognised by their parents, until they fall into the wrong hands who end up destroying them. This have been the case all around the world, especially for those who finally become celebrities. In order to sustain the fame that comes their way, they will venture into all manner of social vices to make ends meet. Some will finally end up as drug addicts and rapists, or into all manner of sinful acts against their destiny. The church must realise that we are where we are today because youths were not properly guided by their parents and the church. We became too busy to guide them right until the devil invaded their hearts. We must understand that when talents are not adequately managed, it can lead to youths becoming aggressive, and with total lack of focus – which can spell doom for us all. The youth age is a vulnerable age, as their

talents are easy to see, and appreciate, and so they may end up in wrong hands as we said earlier. We can also notice that many youths support their families through their talents, and those parents may not be interested in stopping them from making more money. If they are not guided right, they may end up taking too much responsibilities which will destroy them, since they become too money conscious, and the elite, and responsible class may try to avoid them, while politicians will use them to their advantage and end up destroying them. In the news today are youths who are into one form of fraudulent act or the other. Some even end up taking lives. To succeed, youths must manage their time consciously. Many youths waste their valuable times discussing and arguing about worthless events, rather than plan a good career early. Others spend a whole lot of useful time on social media, chatting nonsense. Youths must realise early enough that they have a destiny to fulfil in God. That, they did not come to earth by chance, but through an ordained intervention to save the world from total decay.

Faith confession: Lord! I may have acted wrongly as a youth and have wasted the precious time you gave to me on things that offend you. Today, I repent of my wrongs and promise to stay out of evil.

Let us pray: Lord! I pray, let your everlasting will be fulfilled in my life. I surrender my thoughts into your hands. Invade my heart with your character and let me live to please you all the days of my life. Amen!

Meditation: Psalms 71:4-17; Ecclesiastes 11:10; Exodus 35:30-35

The Victory in your Tongue

Go in, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land. Exodus 6:11



One thing remains a puzzle to many. And this is, why has there not been the kind of power move that was present in the days of the apostles, who ministered with great power and signs, to the glory of God. Many have prayed, fasted and waited for the manifestation of the power of God through His Holy spirit, so that they can experience the touch of God. This, however, seemed unachievable. If we can understand Jesus' command in Matthew 28:19-20, we will understand that powers are meant to be exercised by everyone who is called by His name. The disciples achieved by the words in their tongues, because the Lord was with them as he promised in Matthew 28:20 – "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." He is still with us, because the world has not yet come to an end. It was early in the morning in an African village. A woman in her late 50s was beaten by an angry mob. The reason was that she confessed the night before that she was responsible for the death of her two sons who had just graduated from the university. How did this happen? She went further to explain, as they said, that she had converted them into animals, which they cooked in their coven. I was going to school that very morning. And I wondered in my inner mind, what kind of power could turn a human being into an animal? I had no good knowledge of the Bible then except what I was taught in my Christian Religious Knowledge (CRK) class, which to me is a far cry from what the Bible is all about. These CRK classes were more of an academic exercise for learning moral lessons. We must have heard also how people are being turned into animals – some of us think it is a lie. We should thank God for His protection over us. There is evil around; men only know how to do evil through

incantations and echnatments. As I matured in the knowledge of God, I came across the story of Nebuchadnezzar who crawled into the forest and lived as a best as a punishment from God. "Is this why the witch changes humans into animals for their feasts?" To be very frank, witches were feared as I grew up. I also heard of the occults. Many became members with the belief that they are saved from the claws of witches. The terrific fears that visited the powerless was unfathomable. Today, you have the power of God in your tongue – as you confess Him as Lord. What you command is what happens. As children of God, God expects us to use our tongues to affect our world positively. Hence Jesus says, in John 6:63, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." If not, why would He frown at speaking words that will not edify our souls, when He said – "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment" – Matthew 12:36.

Faith confession: God! I am willing to exercise your word in my tongue, against the kingdom of darkness and every power that will rise up against my destiny. No weapon fashioned against me shall stand.

Let us pray: Dear Lord! I soak myself in your blood. Let me continually be filled with the assurance of safety in your precious name. Safeguard my soul from the tongues of destruction. Amen!

Meditation: Numbers 22:1-38; Isaiah 42:22; Matthew 12:34

Inclining Your Ears to Hear Well

Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live... Isaiah 55:3



In the early hours of Sunday, the 17th day of July 2011, as the church prepared to meet together, in what they termed, “church service,” an order was released in heaven, and the angels moved round the earth, with the voice, “who can find a virtuous woman, for her price is more than rubies.” The entire atmosphere was filled with this question. As I went to take my bath at around 5:30am, I could still hear the voice. Then I waited silently in the bathroom, and I heard, “I want my church to be like a virtuous woman, but when I look down, what do I see? Fornication, adultery, lasciviousness, back-biting, hatred, seduction, lesbianism, politics, lies, unfaithfulness, broken marriages, witchcraft, cultism, spiritual deafness, bribery...” the voice went on and on. I paused for a while, and then came out of the bathroom. “God just spoke to me,” I told my wife who was already dressed for the morning service. I waited until everyone had left the house, and I sat down on a chair, with my laptop on the desk, I was prepared to start typing. Then I heard, “I want my church to be like the virtuous woman, a home of love and unity, a home of respect, a home where everyone is committed to evangelism, a home where I can visit and live with them. But what do I see anytime I look upon my bride, she is despised and rejected, and she doesn't bother? She pride herself about, in the public, in her nakedness, without shame. She is drunk with the politics of the world. She flirts around with her old lover, who brought her so much shame until I came to set her free. She has forgotten so easily, how she was despised, and now she looks back at me without respect and regard. I will soon visit home, to see my beautiful bride. Will she be at home, or will she be in the arms of her

accuser?” I pondered over this for a while, then I heard again, “I am sending you to my bride. Tell her, I cherish her so much, and that I will soon be coming back home. I am jealous and will not want to see her flirting with her accuser, who deceived her, and made her drunk until she was naked, and her enemies mocked her. I will soon be home. Tell my love that I cherish her so much. She should repent before I come home. I want to dine with her. I want to feel her warmth. I am coming home sooner than she expected.” And the voice stopped. Throughout that day, I was moody, and I was thinking, how best to convey this message to the Lord's bride, whom He loved so much, The Church of Christ. This has been the entire reason behind this devotional that you study every month. Christ is visiting soon – please incline your ears to hear the words of caution and direction. With the level of idolatry and pollution in the world, it is time you start to hear the voice of heaven clearly yourself. I present to you – Christ, our everlasting king. Pray for His leading voice, and you will not miss your way. Shalom!

Faith confession: From today onwards, I am determined to listen to the voice of God in Christ. My soul shall be drenched in the will of God forever.

Let us pray: Today, teach me how to incline my ears to hear your voice. Help me to always be mindful of your presence and let my heart yearn for your joy more and more till my dying day. Amen!

Meditation: Matt 11:28-30; Leviticus 26:14-20

Overcoming the Satanic Cloud in the Church

*All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way;
and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53:6*



From yesterday's devotional, it was obvious that the church had gone astray. The house of God is now looking more like a Casino. With fanciful stage lights that takes the heart of the congregation from the altar of heaven. I could see why the Lord was angry. I could also, hear Lucifer laughing uncontrollably, while I could sense the calmness in heaven. The Angels were still moving round the earth, searching from one home to the other, from one worship centre to the other, from one cathedral to the other, from one synagogue to the other, from one fellowship centre to the other. They searched and searched, looking for a virtuous-like church. But none was found. The Angels would sigh at every search of disappointment. Meanwhile, the old fool, the liar who deceives the world, was busy mocking and laughing at the host of heaven. And I could also sense in my spirit, Lucifer, talking to the congregation, "the church is wasting time today, remember you have an appointment to catch, and that business proposal to finish. Never forget also that you need to call your business associate. Anyway, just wait so that you can share your business card, and invite one sister to lunch tomorrow in your office. Oh! I see, you even forgot to lock your car, could you please take a walk outside the church and see if the car was actually locked. Aha! can you see the car parked next to you, it is the latest model, and you can also have this. Now go back to your seat. Oh! no - just make a call to see if your business associate is still waiting. Aha! you even missed his call and a text message..." The Angels were still searching, from one crusade camp to the other, from one prayer camp to the other. And every time, there is a sad look in their faces, with a sigh that sounds like thunder.

Then I saw the image of the cross right in front of me, and I knelt down at the altar to pray. Then I saw the Lord coming out from the cloud, clothed with glory, looking upon His bride. I looked into the church. I saw confused faces, sad looking faces, angry faces, some few smiles, some expectant looks, and I turned to face the altar and prayed again, I could still see Him, looking upon His bride. But the bride was not prepared for the wedding feast. God is angry, and He says to me, "they won't listen to you, but tell them, I will be coming soon, how prepared is my church?" As we study His word today, pray that the Holy Spirit of God should search your heart, and tell you where you have erred. Salvation is here. Can you just humble yourself before His Golden altar in heaven – before His throne of grace and mercy and plead for forgiveness and promise not to fail Him again. See, our Lord is merciful. He doesn't merit all the sin we commit against His holiness. It is the frank truth. God values sanctity. Let us keep His sanctuary holy in our heart.

Faith confession: Dear Lord – I can see your concern for my lost soul. I can see the anger in your heart because of my sins. I may not have realised how far my ways have hurt you. Show me mercy Lord.

Let us pray: Lord! Restore your love towards me so that I may be able to obtain your mercy and grace. Save my soul from eternal destruction and set your heart towards me for good as I follow your will. Amen!

Meditation: Isaiah 43:1-12; Psalms 14:1-7; Ezekiel 18:4

None of These Diseases

...If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee... Exodus 15:26



The first time I read the above anchor scripture, was when I started understanding the relationship between obedience to God and our state of health. One question that I am yet to find answers to is if all illnesses are as a result of sin against God. We read in Psalms 32:3, "When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long." Here, David recalled that he had serious feverish ach in his bones to the extent he could not walk again, when he was yet to confess his sins. Then as we read down to verse 5, David said his healing came after he acknowledged his sins and the mercy of the Lord poured down to give him sound health – "I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." He further encouraged the godly to keep taking this route to have divine healing from the Lord, from verses 6-10. The question comes again, do we become sick because of our sins? Jesus says in Mark 2:10, "...the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins..." So, if sin has nothing to do with illness, why is our salvation tied to the forgiveness of sins? You see, we might not be sick because we are sinners, but it is important for us to know that guilts can make us become very sick. When we confess our sins before God and have the assurance of forgiveness, our guilts will definitely give way to an inner joy that nourishes our entire body and soul. So, the link between sins and forgiveness is tied to the reason for the blood of the new covenant which is shed for the remission of our sins (Matt. 26:28). This is to enable us to become healed from all manner of diseases and to give us a

sound mind filled with the spirit of resurrection. That, even if we were physically dead – we will receive the breath of life again. Jesus says in John 5:25, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." Our entire life will receive a supernatural spring of healing and blessings if we can love Jesus with all our hearts – and appreciate the salvation He earned for us with His precious blood. This is the truth and the secret to an enduring peace and tranquillity here on earth and beyond. Jesus says in Matt 11:6, "And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me." This verse remains my secret to success in all that I do. I stay away from anything that offend Him and preach to others about God and His Christ – His salvation for the souls of mankind. In return, God showers me with blessings, sound mind and divine healing. Can you prove to others that you love Jesus Christ and His gospel by preaching? If you can do this – none of these diseases will come upon you. This is how healing miracle comes.

Faith confession: I confess your divine power to forgive sins and make me whole over my soul. I am soaked in your waves and your billows. I am nourished with inner joy because my sins are forgiven.

Let us pray: Lord! I trust in your power to save. Let your mercy continually pour down your forgiveness upon my soul and body. Teach me daily on how to overcome sin and guide me from evil. Amen!

Meditation: Psalm 6:1-10; Matthew 5:1-48

A Book on your life

*The hoary (grey) head is a crown of glory;
if it be found in the way of righteousness. Proverbs 16:31*



If you were to write a book on your life so far, what will make the news! What will interest people! What will interest God in the book? This is how reckoning starts. Even if life is not worth living as we now see many youths taking their lives through suicide, yet to live up to the age where we will have grey hairs is a pleasant gift of God to humanity. The anchor verse says that a greyed head is a crown of glory – only when such a man of age is righteous. I like talking about our old age, because we will definitely get there as the Lord himself has promised – “There shall nothing cast their young, nor be barren, in thy land: the number of thy days I will fulfil” – Exodus 23:26. I do this consciously so that I know what to expect when I become old and full of age. I sit daily to plan for my children – to see that their future will be definitely a crown of glory unto the Lord. I encourage my wife daily to love God more so that we will see old age together, not in sorrow but in the joy of the Lord. I preach and teach the truth espoused by the gospel of Christ so that I will not be found wanting in the sight of the Lord. If we are conscious that the grey hairs is a crown of glory given to those who are righteous in God, we will truly work to earn it, and wash our hands clean from all that offends God. We hear how in many developed countries; homes are built for the aged and old with no one to care for them. Is this how we want our old age to become; that, we will have no child to cater for our needs? That we would not have lived a life that God can sustain in glory all our lives? Many are bedridden for ages before they die. Is this the punishment of God too? I really do not think so. But scripture keep saying that our aged years will be full of peace if we truly stand to do the will of God. This is

affirmed in Psalms 37:37, “Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.” I spoke to a lady in her fifties of spending time with God, and her reply was that there was no time on her side. I asked her if she would have time to negotiate death if it comes her way. She paused for a minute and looked at me. I expected her to say it wasn’t her portion, because this is how mediocrity has made many Christians not to think beyond their present situation. She looked at me with a fearful gaze. Then, I asked – “if God take away your husband today, what will you do?” Are you so busy attending to events that are controlled by day and night. Why have we given so much attention to what is beyond our control? Why not take today to consider your relationship with Him. Is it really the struggle of life that is making it difficult for you to give your time to serving the Lord? Are you going to gain the whole world by your struggles? Don’t the little ants build their anthill? Even as we care for our physical body, let us equally care for our soul today. May His peace grant you understanding in this matter.

Faith confession: Lord, I understand from today’s devotional that I cannot really care for my life beyond what God is willing to allow and sustain. I therefore give myself a way to serve you.

Let us pray: My Lord and God, forgive me for I may not have had enough time for you. I pray that you grant me the willpower to sustain your love in my heart, that I may give you my time. Amen!

Meditation: Luke 12:16-21; 2 Samuel 17:1-23

A book on good neighbourliness

... *We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you. Zech. 8:23*



If you were asked to write a book on how you have positively affected your neighbours, what will be your selling point? Is anyone volunteering to serve your God because you lived an exemplary life among them? Why do we think scripture says we should love our neighbour as ourselves if not to influence their decision to follow us to serve God? It is the same reason Jesus says we should love our enemies as well else we won't be different from hypocrites who only claim they love God, yet their characters do not reflect the image and likeness of God – Matthew 5:44, “But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.” Paul further mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 5:15, “See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.” Maintaining good neighbourliness is a strong evangelical tool. It is the power to defeat the enemy. Hence, scripture advised in Proverbs 15:1, “A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.” The way and manner we use words can affect how our neighbours perceive our intentions. When our neighbour is grieving, that is the time to show him or her that we sincerely care when we visit and let them know they have a companion in Christ. If you have the physical means to help, you can but do not fail to connect your action with your love for Christ. Christ is expecting us to become His fishers of men. The message of Christ to the disciples is clear on this, when He told them that they will become fishers of men. Men is the plural of man, which shows that God is in the business of “pluralisation,” if you will permit me to use the word that way. Get as many neighbours you can on the ship of salvation in Christ as His grace

permits you to do. This is His ultimate desire for every saved soul. One way to test if we have truly yielded to the call to follow Jesus Christ, is to ensure we live in peace among of neighbours, in every community we find ourselves - be it in our work places, market, or school – because our Christlike life is not restricted to Sundays alone. It is a life in the spirit which is expected to influence persons of all race and colour to follow Christ. I encourage you to always put God first, and do not let your human ego be the reason people will hate coming to God through Christ. This is why scripture equally says that – “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” – Matthew 5:16. You won't miss your reward, if you keep yielding to the need of the Lord to evangelise the world for Him. Do not think that we have believers everywhere. Many of those you see in church are not interested in God. So, you see that we have real work to do, and by His grace we shall sail through.

Faith confession: I humble myself before your throne today o God, that you may do all that will give you joy through me. Help me to regard my neighbour with respect so that I can win them to you.

Let us pray: King of glory, I may not have confessed you enough through my attitude towards my neighbours. I ask that you give me the grace and strength to stand in faith and allow my life to become a soul winning tool for my neighbours. That, they will henceforth follow me to serve you in your house. Amen!

Meditation: Zechariah 8:17; Romans 13:10; Galatians 5:14; James 2:8

Exerting Dominion Through Soul Winning

And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. Luke 10:17



We exert dominion over the kingdom of darkness when we pull people out of the prison house of the devil. Hear the concern of God in Isaiah 42:22, "But this is a people robbed and spoiled; they are all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison houses: they are for a prey, and none delivereth; for a spoil, and none saith, Restore." These people are robbed of everything. And in verse 16, God said His will is that they may be led out of darkness, and how does He do it? By getting someone to win you to Him, and then you also win another, in a continuous chain process. Jacob saw a ladder connecting heaven to mankind and Jesus made us to know that He is that ladder, which is the reason why He is the mediator between man and God (John 1:51). This is like getting people into a particular mobile phone network. The more subscribers the mobile companies have, the more established they become. People know what CNN stands for: They are there to tell you where disasters are happening all around the world. As a child of God, everyone should know what you stand for, which is, bringing souls to God. In one of my teachings in the church, I told my congregation to write out all the names in their phones on a note book, and for each name, they should try and describe who the people are spiritually, in physique, characters, and attitudes. Then from the list, know those who can add value to their lives, and those they need to add value to their lives. God brings us in contact with people for the purpose of soul winning, character moulding and blessings. So, if you can adequately describe anybody who is close to you, you can win them to your God. The strength of a kingdom is known by the

maturity and strength of the citizens. Scripture says in Mark 6:7, "And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits." We can see a tie between preaching the gospel and dominion over unclean spirits. It is a matter of the mind. If we can have people receive the word of God in Christ, their freedom will definitely come. In Luke 13:29, scripture also says that the entire world needs to be saved – "And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God." This implies that our target souls are all over the world. What have we done to reach the world? In your own little way, you can assist. Win yourself first, then your household, then your neighbourhood and so on and so forth. You will see how much dominion over the kingdom of darkness you will exert. Because the devil uses those close to us to bring us down, if these people are already in Christ, you will definitely soar unto prominence.

Faith confession: Lord - Today, I understand the need to win souls, because it is the easiest way to have dominion over the kingdom of darkness, as we can disconnect the devil's access to us this way.

Let us pray: Lord, let your incarnate word give me the boldness to preach and teach your word to sinners. Let me win souls that will abide in your vineyard as I preach your word, henceforth. Amen!

Meditation: Luke 10:1-22; Psalms 51:1-13

Not Always About Money

Happy are thy men, and happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom. 2 Chronicles 9:7



If you read through the book of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, you will understand what these men and servants in the courtyard of Solomon gained by hearing from the horse's mouth. We become what we are because of the power in words. Engineers, accountants, medical doctors, lawyers, and all manner of profession on this earth are all the outcome of words. The words we hear have the power to mould and destroy. This is the more reason we must guide what we hear or read. How often do you read or hear words and you discover that your burden and sorrow become less or totally taken away? We equally mould our lives after role models – the people we admire. If you have listened to some Christian songs, you will know the secular musician they are imitating. This is why the songs sometimes lack spiritual flavour. The word of God sends healing into our soul and body because it is conceived in the spiritual to do so. Hence, if the gospel songs we listen to were the outcome of the singers relationship with the realm of God, definitely the words you hear will minister grace unto our souls. What am I trying to say here? It is the need for us to be more vigilant in the spiritual, so that we can connect our little world with the purpose of heaven. If we look clearly, throughout the history recorded in the Bible and around the world, there was no where it was said that a single man ever acquired the kind of wealth that Solomon had. This could mean that his preaching of vanity in the book of Ecclesiastes must have benefitted so many to this day. I will enjoin us today not to base our relationship and interest on the need to get money or wealth from others. This is one thing that is destroying our walk with God. People run

to churches where their immediate need of food, shelter, and clothing are meant, and will stick there for eternity without the care to nourish their souls with the words of salvation. The question I have always asked is if these persons have not read where our scripture says in Acts 20:35, of how Jesus encouraged us to give, because "It is more blessed to give than to receive." What differentiate those who have enough to give from those who keep receiving is how much of the words of truth they have sown in their hearts. So, be encouraged – do not associate with only those who can give you money. Look for those who have enormous wisdom and experience in the area you need help and learn from them. You can buy their books or listen to their words of encouragement from where you will be able to understand how they achieved their own success and steadfastness in the Lord. Words are given in due season – the earlier you seek them, they better: "... a word spoken in due season, how good is it!" – Proverbs 15:23. Remember, the earlier the better!

Faith confession: Lord – I need the right word to change my situation around for the better. Send me the one who will give me the right word to change my situation. Send your word o God! I am expectant.

Let us pray: Oh Lord! I pray – send me help in the form of a word. Even as I study your word – send a word of healing into my heart. I pray thee - send your word of breakthrough into my soul this week. Amen!

Meditation: John 16:1-33; Judges 13:8-9

The Importance of Good Observation

Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. Matthew 10:16



Two young men stood across the road watching sternly at the bank. As Jane stepped out of the bank entrance, one of the men signalled to the other – a swift movement, with a revolver butt showing, both of them jumped across the road divider, making haste towards where Jane had packed her car. She stopped, picked up her phone as if trying to make a call. The two men walked carefree as if trying to board a taxi. Trembling ran over her, stepping backward, she went into the bank again – the bag of money was conspicuous with the help of an assistant behind her. “I can sense danger” – she told the bank manager. “You mean?” The bank manager replied. “Thieves” – she cuts in. The manager went into the CCTV monitoring room and saw the two young men on police uniform. He came back. “They are the police” – he said. “I don't think so.” She replied, “But they are uniformed men.” The manager reassured. “Unnnh - so I thought too, but there is something in me that tells me – they aren't.” Severally, we might have heard of people who were terrified because they sensed danger. It is my intention in today's devotional to remind us that wisdom demands that we become very observant and inquisitive about the events in our surroundings. If we operate with the wisdom of God, we won't fall for the trap of the enemy. If there is one area Christians often get into danger, it is their inability to observe carefully before taking a decision. We are often quick to shout – “it is not my portion.” Our Lord advised in the anchor verse above that we must demonstrate a strong sense of observation. The serpent used figuratively above can hide in a home for a long time waiting for the day to strike its prey. Though, as Jesus

mentioned – we are expected to be harmless as a dove, yet that does not take our sense of security from us. Many Christians have met their deaths because they did not watch the tide of attacks on their faith. We read in scripture that the moment the disciples were hunted, they took to their heels as they preach the word of God wherever they go - Acts 11:19. It is in this instance that Philip met the Ethiopian Eunuch he led to Christ. Watch your environment for intruders. Be watchful night and day. Do not live a carefree life. Teach your children to be vigilant. The grace of God is sufficient for us, but that does not take away our sense of reasoning. God did not give us eyes, ears, and the sense to make meaning from what we observe daily for nothing. The more careful you are, the more you will hear God speak to you about the next action you should take. The Lord said we are sheep in the midst of wolves. Who were the wolves He was referring to? They were those in power. Today, the wolf is all around us as government security agencies that does not give us the much-needed safety in the land. So, watch over your life and that of others.

Faith confession: Lord – I am aware I need to learn how to observe events in my surrounding and to be alert to whatever happens in my environment so that I will know how to protect my life from danger.

Let us pray: Oh Lord! Help me to observe events around me keenly, so that I will not enter into the trap of the enemy. Guide my footsteps daily through your spirit of guidance. Amen!

Meditation: Psalms 55:1-23; Psalms 102:7-8

Demonic Distractions

But it came to pass, that when Sanballat heard that we builded the wall, he was wroth, and took great indignation, and mocked the Jews. Nehemiah 4:1



Right in a church service, a young man was busy distracting a sister. “I thought we could talk outside for a moment”—he whispered. “But I am in church”—the lady retorted. “O—yea, I know.” He picked out his phone and asked for her number. Her aunt was sitting close to her, so she was careful, but she did something. She coded her phone number on the notebook she uses to write down Bible verses during sermon, as they sat in the church. She started—“in the beginning, the earth was without form,” the young man understood this to be “0.” She nodded her head, and she wrote again. “What day was after the seventh day? The young man wrote the number “8,” she nodded her head in agreement. Then she wrote, the Bible didn’t tell us anything. The young man wrote, “0,” she smiled. She went further and wrote. “But the eight, sixth, seventh, third, seventh and I say seventh and the ninth and the first—God is great.” The young man understood perfectly. He had decoded her phone number as “08086737791.” The above illustration is to cast our mind on the kind of things that happen in church, as many have turned the church into a place where they come to distract others from yielding their hearts to God and to argue. The anchor verse tells us the extent others can go to stop the work of God. I came to learn of how one can be distracted from following the course of destiny at the very early phase of my ministry. Several events were happening and when I kneel down to pray, all I will hear was—“they are distracting you, just be focused.” This was how I went ahead to face my calling. I am glad today that I heard that inner voice of the spirit, else I would have been parked up by the different antagonistic strategies manned along the path for me by the devil. There are people planted by

the devil to take your attention away from focusing on the call of God upon your life. They can come as a brother or sister sitting next to you in service or as a member in your women, men or youth fellowship who is always distracting others by attacking every discussion in the gathering. These sets of people are only out to ensure the meeting does not achieve any success. They give excuses why certain evangelic programs should not hold, especially when it is related to spending their own money. I will advice you to notice those people who will always attack the move of evangelism in the church for no good and justifiable reason and avoid them. Anyone who will attack the work of God is an enemy of the kingdom. Someone who will be talking in church when sermon is going on is an agent of darkness—set to cause confusion, and to ensure the word of repentance does not sink into the heart of others. If you are in any fellowship in the church and someone is becoming a stumbling block for your drive to champion the work of God, speak out and keep praying that their intentions will not materialise in the name of the Lord. As it happened to Ahithophel, their satanic counsel shall not stand.

Faith confession: Henceforth, I will avoid anyone that will stop the work of God around me.

Let us pray: Lord- I pray not to a barrier to your work of grace. Help me not to listen to distractors. I pray to remain focus in whatever good you have laid in my heart to support your work. Amen!

Meditation: Jeremiah 20:10-11; Nehemiah 6:1-9

When A Dream Become too real to be Discarded

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers... **Ephesians 6:12**



Annabel (not real name), Paul's wife fell into a trance. Her husband was in the midst of some angry looking men, heading into a thick forest. Paul (not real name) was blind folded. As she followed them stealthily, she saw them as they now climbed a red muddy hill. The place reminded her of a similar outcrop somewhere in Nigeria. It was reddish and muddy. The trees were not too high. It was a lonely place – too lonely to escape from. Then as she followed, Paul was now led up to a sacred shrine. An aged looking grey hairy woman came out. Paul was laid on an altar of stone. The grey hairy old woman drew up a knife and lifted it up. And gradually, with some enchantments, started lowering her hand to drive the knife into Paul's heart – then she screamed and woke up. She picks up her phone in that exasperation, sweat drops running from her face and soaking her dress. She made the first frantic call across to Paul. He was not there to pick the call. He had left with his boss to where the boss supposed to make a presentation. It was 2:00pm. The cloud was gathering outside. Few birds could even fly. It was so cloudy that the rains would eventually visit earth. Annabel tried severally but could not reach her husband. Her hopes dashing and nerves shooting out of her skin and becoming tougher than steel. She knelt down to pray – “in your hands o Lord of hosts, I commit my husband. Let not the enemy take hold on his soul. Send help Lord – send help even now. In the name of our Lord – Jesus Christ of Nazareth – Amen!” Still sobbing – she lied down on the sofa, in the seating room – and she slept. She went into another dream, but this time deeper than the former. She saw herself standing in a lonely forest. The ground kept opening all around her and moving towards were she was

standing. As she cried and wailed for help, the deep trench stopped at her feet. She was afraid, then a voice told her to look into the depth. But she refused because she was afraid, she could fall into the pit. The voice came again, and she looked – young beautiful fair looking ladies were being flocked by an angry man. As she looked into the trench, she saw herself in the midst of these ladies and also under severe torture from the angry creature. And the voice said – “This is your soul. It was sent here by your pastor, the day of your wedding. Her mind faded to the day of her wedding, and she recalled the pastor told them to submit their ring a day before the wedding for him to dedicate them, and only gave it to them in the morning of the wedding day. “The moment you and your husband wore the ring – your souls were arrested.” Then the trench closed, and she saw herself in a forest. Her eyes opened and she saw a group of men, tattered looking, with logs of wood on their heads. “These are the souls of the men in your church,” the voice said. Then she also saw her husband with a very heavy log of wood. She wept in the dream. As she wept – the voice replied. “Follow me and you shall be saved.”

Faith confession: I am determined to be spiritually conscious, minding every gathering I found myself.

Let us pray: Lord! deliver my soul from every satanic gathering ganging up to ensure that I live a miserable life. Open my eyes in the spirit as I follow you with all my heart from today forward. Amen!

Meditation: Isaiah 42:22; Isaiah 61:1-11

God Knows Best

*God understandeth the way thereof,
and he knoweth the place thereof. Job 28:23*



It was the stubbornness of the Israelites that made God to give them the ten commandments. There was no need for the laws in Leviticus if they had obeyed to serve Him upon the mountain as God expected (Exodus 3:12). Sooner as they were delivered from Egypt, they started murmuring against God. There is need for us to endure our own wilderness experience with God. This is where God tries our faith. They cried over water and food. The laws in the book of Leviticus was another bondage which they had to be delivered from. Hence in Jeremiah 31:31-34, God says that he will write the new law in our hearts, which is the spirit of Christ crying from our hearts (Galatians 4:6). We are the ones to determine how long we are going to stay in this wilderness period. The earlier we know that God knows what is best for us, the better for us – so that we come to meet Him to teach us His ways. Believers' spiritual maturity in the faith they professes lies in their ability to walk in the path that leads to righteousness when their souls have been restored by God – Psalms 23:3. The children of Israel did not value what God did for them because they did not know what Abraham went through to obtain the trust of God, that made God to enter into a covenant with him, which they now enjoy. It was after the Israelites experience that God changed salvation to be on individual merit. This can be affirmed by Ezekiel 14:14, "Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord God." We can see now that we have to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling –

Philippians 2:12. To experience eternal rest of mind, our service to the Lord must be unique. We need to follow an outlined path for spiritual maturity on this journey of faith. I see this path of growth as involving 'Initiation' into the Christian fold through believing in Christ, an 'Intimation' process through personal communion with Christ and an 'Implantation' process through being sown into the vineyard of God as a seed that will grow, becoming the planting of the Lord and bearing abiding fruits in His Kingdom. These processes will enable Believers to know where they are at the moment and what would happen to them when Christ returns. Every Believer needs to be in the Spirit to exist with God due to the fact that He is a Spirit. Many people are yet to see God, even as Believers, because they do not have the perfect knowledge and understanding of who He is. The Bible says in Matthew 5:8 says, "blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." If you follow sincerely, he will reveal Himself to you. Expect Him!

Faith confession: I am determined to follow you, enduring all that come my way so that I can receive your peace and provisions early.

Let us pray: Lord, I know you know what is best for me. Help me to stop resisting your work of faith in my life. Help me to continue to yield to your divine will, so that my soul will find peace in you. Amen!

Meditation: Deuteronomy 2:7; Jeremiah 29:11-14

Going Forward

Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Isaiah 45:9



We move forward in life when we do not challenge the purpose of God for our destiny. All the argument will not help us. It will only make us to lose the promises of God, and our days of triumph will be delayed as well. As seen in the anchor verse, contending with God is a mere chase after the wind. If God says go – you go. If He says stop, you stop. Do not try to think for Him. Let Him do what He pleases. I prayed for a breakthrough, then I heard a voice as I had my bath one morning that I should write this devotional and make it free. And, off I started. You answer Him first, then He will answer with a bigger reward. Just recently, the taxi man that took me at the airport told me that he saw me preaching on TBN. He was so happy. I smiled and handed him a copy of the devotional when he dropped me and told him thank you. I did not alter a word because someone else had told me at the plane that he saw my billboard everywhere in Lagos. As I lay that day to think about the encounter, I heard a voice. – “be prepared for the task of reaching the world soonest.” So, these people had seen someone else and the Lord is using them to keep me on my feet. I have learnt not to argue with the will of God in my life. I have equally taught my wife so. We are nothing but clay on His wheel. Let Him mould us as He pleases. This is how we can find everlasting peace of mind. It is fruitless trying to argue with Him. Moses argued that He was not qualified for the rescue mission to Egypt. That only made God angrier. It is you He want to send. Do not think that all the riches, wisdom and anointing He gave to you are free. You must invest them in bringing others to Him. Have you thoughtfully studied the parable of the talent in Matthew 25:14-30? Take a good look at verse 26, “His lord answered and said unto him, “thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest

that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed.”” Like this servant, many believe that God is trying to reap where He did not sow. Now, let me tell us a story of a pastor who squandered the wealth God brought to the church. He was asleep one day when the Lord appeared to Him, and told him that his greed was responsible for his message not to have spread to where it ought to, and that he must ensure that he go and preached in those areas whether he likes it or not before his dying day. Another, having bought a brand-new car for himself, had a dream where souls in a particular town where calling him to come and preached. There was no money with him again, and he had to start looking for a buyer to buy his new car so that he can have money for the work of God. The same happened to the children of Israel as they left Egypt. They gathered silver and gold from the Egyptians, and when they had donated it for the moulding of the golden calf, God demanded for the gold and silver for His tabernacle. You see what I mean? If God gives you the power to make wealth – hear from Him before you start spending it, else he will demand it from you and your children will pay dearly for it. It might sound threatening – but this is the truth.

Faith confession: I yield o Lord – it is senseless trying to argue with your purpose. I repent, henceforth.

Let us pray: Lord, help me to follow the leading of your spirit every day of my life. Grant me the wisdom to encourage others to endure their walk with you as you lead us to that place of glory. Amen!

Meditation: Job 40:1-14; James 4:7-8; 1 Pet 5:6-11

Obeying Divine Instructions Unto Safety

*And the woman arose, and did after
the saying of the man of God.... 2 Kings 8:2*



We follow the instructions that we can vouch for its source. As children of God, it is onus on us to be careful as there are prophets of Baal parading themselves around as servants of God. We really need to pray for the spirit of discernment now than ever. In a country where the quest for money and fame has locked up the conscience of men, that all we hear and read is how people use human parts for money rituals, one must be really careful. In the anchor verse we just read, Prophet Elisha revealed a seven-year famine that was about to engulf the land and informed the woman and her son to find a place of solace until the famine was over. The woman obeyed, but when she returned after the seven years her properties were all gone into the hands of others. This king however feared God, and upon hearing the testimony of how God restored her dead child to life, the king appointed an officer to return back all that she had lost while away. If we harken to the instructions of God, as long as it is coming from God, we will not lose anything. Now, let's take this into our various endeavours in life. Imagine you are into business and you received an instruction from God on how to sustain your life first by abandoning your business at that moment in time, though it is a difficult thing to do—as long as it is coming from God, your business will be restored back to you. You see, safety first and that is very important. I have heard of people dying in fire outbreaks when they try to salvage their properties. A child of God always listens to what God will say in a situation. In Isaiah 1:3, the word of God through Prophet Isaiah says, "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." You see, all God is interested in is that we recognise Him as

our owner. If we can yield to His leading, we will have no reason to fear. We read earlier how the disciples ran for their lives when they were being attacked by the Jewish sects – the Pharisees and Sadducees. They ran for safety and because they were alive, they were able to propagate the gospel as we have it recorded today in the Bible. King David gave God a reason why he should spare his life, in Psalms 88:10, "Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise and praise thee?" Recently, we hear of young people taking their lives through suicide. If these people realise that they have a duty of praise unto God, they won't try it. Instead of wishing we should have died because we experience hardship, we must know that we have a duty towards God, and that should encourage us to value the safety of our lives first in every situation. Seek the face of God before you embark on any journey. Ensure you live in a safe and secured environment. Be safety conscious. Hear from God and act! See you in the month of August. Until then, remain in the everlasting love of the most-high God. Peace!

Faith confession: I will be careful henceforth to safeguard my life according to the instructions of God. I will not take my safety for granted in these perilous times.

Let us pray: Lord - the creator of heaven and earth. Let my blood not be spilled by the evil one. Let me live till the days of old until you call me unto yourself. Preserve me in your anointing continually. Amen!

Meditation: Matthew 24:15-22; Luke 4:28-30, 42; 1 Samuel 20:1-42

NOTE

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, leaving small margins at the top and bottom. There are no vertical margin lines, text, or other markings on the page.

Covenant Confession

If you are not born again, you may have studied this devotional as literary material and will not receive the spirit therein. You can make a decision to correct that now by saying this covenant confession:

Lord Jesus, I know now that you died for my sins. I believe and confess you as my Lord and Saviour. Please come into my life and dwell inside me.

If you just said this confession, you should locate a spirit-filled church to join in fellowship with them – let the pastor know you just gave your life to Christ and you will be directed on what to do next. Salvation is a personal race and you must be serious with it.

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SUNDAY
8:30AM

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7:30AM

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- A total transformation in the way you Think and Act
 - Understanding the basics of the Christian life
 - How to Exist as sons of God
 - How to Manifest the true Nature of God
 - Total Freedom from satanic maneuvers
 - How to make Heaven

About the Author

Pastor Oghenethoja Umuteme encountered God the day he was baptised at St Stephen's Anglican Church, Owhelegbo Delta State, when he received a warm feeling in his heart as he confessed the Lord Jesus as His lord and personal saviour. His birth was surrounded with mysteries – he was born to a mother who had been barren for eight years. There was hardly anything he said that did not come to pass as he was growing. In 1994 he had a dream in which he received an orange which contained a bible with a red cover. Events continued dramatically until he started hearing voices telling him to go for rescue, as many souls were heading for destruction. Then it became clear to him that he was being called to carry out the task of restoring mankind back to Jesus.

In January 2006, he heard a voice telling him to read Isaiah 42. On



reading to verse 6, he felt a deep force within him and started trembling and a voice said - 'I have called you.' As he read further

he was getting immersed in the spirit of God and when he read verse 22, the voice said, 'this is your task.' Then on the 13th of October 2008, he heard a voice while driving: 'Service starts in your house on Sunday.' Events happened that were beyond his understanding and on Sunday 19th October 2008, the first public worship service came to pass.

He is trained at Rivers State University, Nigeria; Robert Gordon University, UK; UNICAF University, Cyprus; Nations University, USA; and TGSAT, India; leading to academic degree certificates in engineering, organisational psychology, divinity and theology. He has over 11 years' work experience as an engineer, growing to the position of Engineering Design Lead in the oil and gas industry, and equally has a rich curriculum vitae that covers trainings and experiences in other works of life, such as human resources management, marketing management, legal studies, alternative dispute resolution, etc. Pastor Oghenethoja Umuteme is married to Pastor(Mrs.) Umuteme Adokiye Obele, who supports him in the call of God upon his life, and their marriage is blessed with children.